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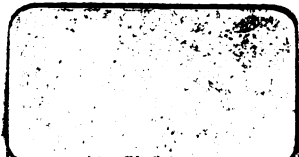
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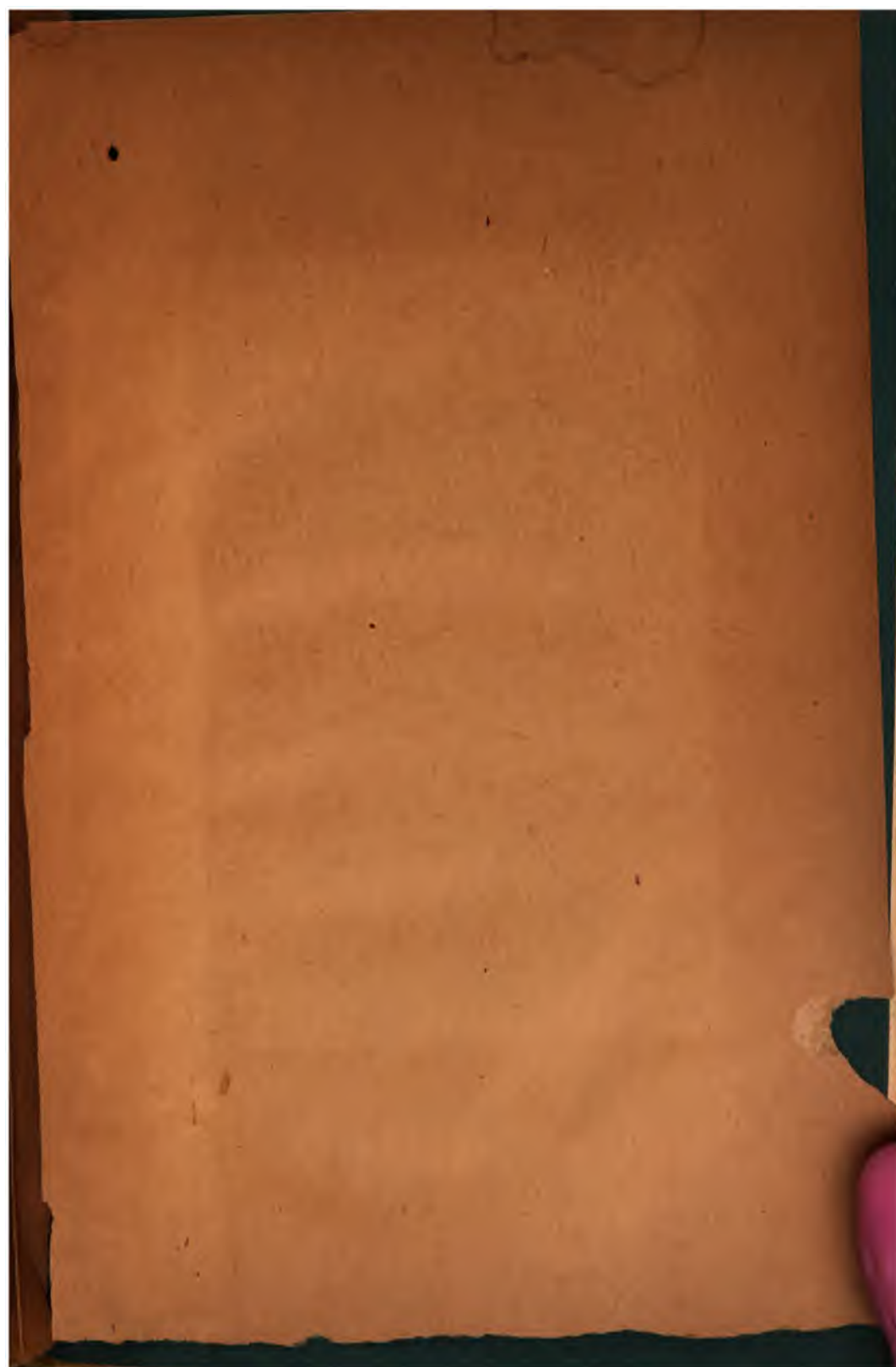
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THE BI-LITERAL
CYPHER.

E. MARRIOTT.

AUTHOR OF "TALKS OF HANDWRITING."



"Magnificent system of shorthand."



REVISED EDITION.
1000 ALPHABET, 10000 WORDS, 100000 SENTENCES, 1000000 PARAGRAPHS.
FOR THE
TELEGRAPHIC AND HANDWRITING.

1881

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instinctively from the unnatural cruelty of depriving their own offspring of his most precious birthrights—home, parental affection, social position—than the notably conscientious and high-minded Sir Nicholas Bacon and his rigidly religious wife, and solicitously affectionate mother of their two sons.* The cypher story goes on to tell us that Francis remained in perfect ignorance that he was not the son of his reputed parents till at about sixteen years of age he heard it through the “indiscretion of a Court Lady.” He at once appealed to the queen herself, who in the course of a very stormy interview acknowledged herself to be his mother.

Subsequently, in a very pathetic interview with Lady Bacon, he learned that the Earl of Leicester was his father. In telling him this she owned she was breaking a very solemn oath never to reveal it.

All this, however, made no difference whatever in their outward relationships, and during the remaining thirty-six years or more of Lady Bacon’s life, no one ever had a suspicion that she was not as truly the mother of Francis as of her first-born son, Nicholas Bacon.

On the assumption for the moment of the truth of the cypher story, Francis himself certainly went most gratuitously out of his way to mislead posterity when dedicating the second book of ‘The Advancement of Learning’ to King James, he wrote of Queen Elizabeth as “a sojourner rather than an inhabitant of the world, in respect of her unmarried life,” contrasting it with the happiness of her successor “blessed with royal issue.”

* Moreover, let any one reflect for a moment by what means could any woman—least of all a queen, constantly surrounded by numerous attendants—so conceal, and that on two occasions, all the circumstances appertaining to motherhood, or so seal the lips of the many who *must* have been in the secret (had there really been such a secret), including those who effected the alleged substitution of the children, that no hint of the events in question transpired till the cypher story is supposed to reveal them more than 300 years after!

Can Mrs. Gallup expect us to believe that Bacon wrote these words while believing himself to be the queen's legitimate son—that he addressed with profoundest loyal respect the occupant of a throne he deemed his own by right—and twelve years later record in laborious cypher as follows :—

“Our name is Francis Bacon by adoption, but it shall be different, for the queen our sovereigne, married by private rite to the Earle of Leicester, is our mother.....and wee be not base-bornwe be Tudor, and our stile.....shall be Francis the First—king of our realme.”

Surely one would have thought that even “*la crédulité de l'incrédulité*” could not have reached to the acceptance of this!

Nevertheless in justice to our own “*incrédulité*” we must give something more of the cypher story, the rest of which we are told is mainly occupied with Bacon's wail over his disappointed hopes that his royal mother might at last acknowledge him as her heir to the throne of England; hopes finally crushed by, as he is made to write, “her anger against the Earl our Father, who ventured on matrimony with the Dowager Countess of Essex.”

To my mind this touches the acme of the incredible in the cypher story. It is true that history leaves no question but that Leicester in early days did aspire to the hand of the queen. Henry VIII. had married the daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, why should not their daughter marry the son of an earl? So notorious were his ambitious hopes, that he was widely suspected of having instigated the murder of his first wife, the hapless Amy Robsart.* But had Leicester ever been legally

* The tragic tale of Lumnor Hall supplies, as we all know, the basis of one of the most thrilling of the Waverley novels; but though the pathos of Sir Walter Scott's telling of it is not a whit beyond the truth, the details are far from historical. Amy Robsart's pitiful death, let it have been caused how if may, took place some years before the revels at Kenilworth. See the ‘Dictionary of National Biography,’ s. v. ‘Robert Dudley.’

married to the queen, and that in the presence of *selected witnesses*, had she really borne him two sons, now grown to man's estate, and each of them (according to the cypher story) cognizant of his royal parentage, is it conceivable that he and the Countess of Essex, even if undeterred by no higher fear than the fear of discovery, would have dared to incur that risk by a marriage which (if the cypher story were true) was at once a punishable legal crime and the grossest of all possible insults to the queen, whether as a sovereign or an injured wife? Should any ill chance, such as actually occurred, bring the marriage of the earl and countess to the royal hearing, the lives of both of them would probably have paid the forfeit.*

The queen's deep resentment at Leicester's marriage is historically true, and was no more than was sure to ensue from her well-known displeasure when any one whom she specially graced with her favours ventured to marry. Queen Elizabeth, like the Turk, would bear no rival near the throne of her affections.

But it is no less historically true that her anger on this occasion proved to be very transient. Within three or four months Leicester was recalled to Court and reinstated in fullest measure in the queen's good graces, and remained the most favoured of favourites till his death in September, 1588.

Would any wife—let alone a queen, and that queen Elizabeth Tudor—so feel or so conduct herself towards a criminally faithless husband?

Thus much I have written, much more I could write,

* Leicester's marriage was told to the queen by M. Simier, the agent in the negotiations for the projected marriage of Elizabeth and the Duke d'Alençon. He feared that the queen's known partiality for Leicester might interfere with the prince's interests, and took this direct method to disparage him in her estimation. For all this and much more about Leicester's *three* marriages see 'Dictionary of National Biography,' *sub voce* 'Robert Dudley.'

on the wild improbabilities of these supposed cypher revelations; but it occurs to me that to give one brief example of what the working out of such a cypher implies will best set forth the preposterous impossibility of its being used to anything approaching the extent Mrs. Gallup imagines.

One of the extracts given us by Mr. Sinnett begins thus:

"When the masques in my friend Ben Jonson's name have been entirely decyphered, take Greene's and Peele's workes in th' order giv'n in th' 'Faerie Queen.'"

This sentence contains 117 letters, which to express by the bi-literal cypher requires 585 letters. I will take only the first three words = 14 letters, requiring only 70 in the text. Mr. Sinnett does not tell us in what page of the Folio Mrs. Gallup found the words in question, but any passage will serve for cypher purposes, and I take the concluding speech in Act IV. of 'Henry V.' (Knight's edition):

Do we all holy rites;
Let there be sung Non nobis and Te Deum;
The dead with charity enclosed in clay:

Now from these lines to evolve "When the Masques" they must first be written as follows by the cypher-writer himself, and the significant letters in some sort of way pointed out for the type-setter to reproduce in print.* I have denoted such supposed marks by italics:—

*Dowea llhol yrite slett herab esung nonno bisan dtede
umthe deadw ithch arity enclosed, &c.*

Now if all this be necessary to produce *three* words, let any one with the cypher alphabet before him try his own hand on, say, five-and-twenty words—and then estimate, if he can, what must be the intensely close attention and the enormous amount of time required to express thousands of words in tens of thousands of letters; what possible hope of avoiding some errors on the part of the cypherer himself; what the certainty of countless ones on that of sixteenth-century type-setters in such a

* See the bi-literal alphabet on p. 4.

mass of minutely marked proof-sheets, thereby reduced to chaos—for how was any one to distinguish between intentional and accidental marks?

And such a cypher as this is supposed to pervade not one literary work only, but volume after volume of copious works up to that time attributed to well-known and contemporary literary men.

Is it possible to believe that all this extensive literature, plus the arrangement of its proof-sheets to introduce the cypher, was the *secretly* wrought addition to the acknowledged literary works of the most laborious of authors, who rewrote his own greatest work, the 'Novum Organum,' twelve times, and took twelve years to do it in.

The supposition is so preposterously absurd that one is tempted to throw pen and paper aside and laugh at the bare thought of its being made the subject of reasonable argument, and to feel that Mr. Leslie Stephen's amusing parody of the Baconian arguments, 'Did Shakespeare write Bacon?'* really is the best answer wherewith to meet them.

But before I literally lay down my pen there is one remark I cannot refrain from making, viz., that those who find themselves able to accept this latest cypher story must give up their strongest argument against the Shakespeare authorship of the Plays on the ground of his being too utterly illiterate and of too degraded a character to make it possible that he should have written them, or at least must allow that Francis Bacon held no such opinion; for the last extract I will make from the cypher is as follows (the emphasizing is of course my own):

"The next volume will be under W. Shakespeare's name..... When I have assumed men's names, th' next step is to create for each a stile *natural to th' man*," &c.

I leave the results of the application of these words to the candid reader's own judgment.

* See *National Review*, November number of present year.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE writing the foregoing I have chanced to obtain a sight of Mrs. Gallup's own book—before which I can but say that I sit down in stunned amazement.

The writer is evidently a highly educated and clever woman—her literary style is clear and forcible—and the indomitable perseverance with which she has pursued a task of herculean labour would in itself win our highest admiration, but becomes purely painful when exercised in support of the wild impossibilities of the supposed results.

To answer such a volume in full detail is out of the question in my own case, and it would be hard to find any one possessing at once the qualifications and the leisure requisite for so formidable a task. This, however, may perhaps be the less regretted, as it would, after all, too probably prove to be labour thrown away.

There are two passages which stand at the very outset of Mrs. Gallup's imposing-looking volume,* one giving the summary of her conclusions, the other partially showing the processes by which she arrives at them. If any one can read these and fail to see the practical utter impossibilities of the one, and the absolute untrustworthiness of the other, further argument is hopeless.

The latter, which treats of the cypher itself, I will take first.

Speaking of the cypher story as found in the Shakespeare plays, Mrs. Gallup tells us of "parts of some words and sentences left unfinished in one, finding completion in the next."

Again, that "the rule for decyphering is simple and

* Introduction, pp. ii, ix.

easily comprehended, but many stumbling-blocks occur in the books, placed there with the evident purpose of making the decyphering more difficult"!

Of this famous bi-literal cypher we have already seen that Bacon himself said it was one by which "anything could be made out of anything," and "impossible, therefore, to be decyphered by any one who had not the key." No one, so far as I know, pretends that Bacon entrusted the secret to any one; and even supposing some one to have the key, what confidence can be felt as to any interpretation of such a cypher as that above described? * But one passage, given in what purport to be Bacon's own words, will set the uncertainty of any interpretation in a yet stronger light:—

"A storie cannot be followed untill all shall be found. Th' different stories being placed therein as our work was done, none can make an end untill th' links o' th' twisted chaine bee followed, now into one booke, now into another, as a river doth bende, or roads by manie tortuous waies, wind by these countrey houses, for no historie hath ended yet. None who began to reade this story, or work out these ciphers came to an end of anything, because no part could be compleated untill all bee compleated. This doth grow from the plann itselfe, the fragments being kept many long yeeres, small portions being used at one time sometimes in our Spenser's name, Marlowe's, Peele's and Shakespeare's, mine, also Ben Jonson's, affording our diverse masques another colour as 'twere, to baffle all seekers, to which we shall add Burton's." †

If any one can bring himself to believe that Francis Bacon deliberately set himself to write the secret history of his own life, and new versions of many public events

* I should like to remind the reader that this new cypher fills 368 pages of Mrs. Gallup's volume, averaging one thousand letters per page=1,834,000 letters for the cypher, all to be put into sets of five letters each, and that not consecutively, but pieced together from various volumes written at long intervals of time, and all marked for the future decypherer by Bacon's own hand. *Credat Judæus!*

† P. 110.

of Queen Elizabeth's reign on such a plan as this, argument, as I have already said, is hopeless.*

But now to turn to Mrs. Gallup's summary of the entire cypher-story results. It is thus confidently stated (p. 2):

"The proofs are overwhelming and irresistible that Bacon was the author of the delightful lines attributed to Spenser, the fantastic conceits of Peele and Greene, the historic romances of Marlowe, the immortal poems put forth in Shakespeare's name, as well as the 'Anatomy of Melancholy' of Burton."

Now here we have the names of six well-known literary (or, according to the cypher, supposed literary) men who are represented as consenting throughout their whole lives to pass themselves off as the authors of works, some of them of the highest merit, of which not one of them ever wrote a line, and who succeeded in so maintaining by word and deed their pseudo-fame that among nearest relatives, personal friends, and the literary world in general no one ever had the slightest suspicion that it was all a lifelong falsehood.

I will take one instance only. No name more widely known than that of Edmund Spenser is to be found among the "Warblers" of those

.....melodious bursts that fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still.

Born about 1551 (or 1552), he entered Merchant Taylors' School within a year from its foundation in 1561, passing thence to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, in 1570.

* Mrs. Gallup has devoted several pages to specimens of the bi-literally told cypher, but as, with the exception of here and there some capitals in the place of small letters, there is nothing whatever to denote the significant letters, the reader has no means of testing her interpretation, and it would be as easy to make the text render up a book of Hooker's 'Ecclesiastical Polity' or a translation of 'Don Quixote,' or anything else which a decypherer might amuse himself by seeking for, even as Mrs. Gallup herself believes she has somewhere found large portions of a translation of Homer, which Francis Bacon had written in his youth, as a school exercise, and thought fit to commit to posterity through the cypher!

A singularly ripe scholar, he early won his way among the most eminent literary men of the time. He was known as the author of numerous minor works in prose and verse, but the publication in 1579 of the 'Shepherd's Calendar,' under the modest *nom de plume* of "Immerito" raised him in the estimation of his contemporaries to the first place among English poets. Some few years later Nash wrote of him as "Our divine Edmund Spenser."

But the 'Faerie Queen' was already in preparation. Sir Walter Raleigh and Gabriel Harvey, one of the best scholars of his day, were among Spenser's most intimate friends, and with both of them he held prolonged critical correspondence on the subject of the 'Faerie Queen,' and it was Raleigh's delighted approval of it that finally decided its publication. The first three books were in 1590 set forth by "William Ponsonby" with the following dedication to the queen:—

TO
THE MOST HIGH
MIGHTIE
AND
MAGNIFICENT
EMPRESS RENOW-
MED FOR PIETIE VER:
TUE AND ALL GRATIOUS
GOVERNMENT ELIZABETH BY THE
GRACE OF GOD QUEENE OF ENGLAND
FRAUNCE AND IRELAND AND OF VIRGINIA
DEFENDOUR OF THE FAITH E.T.C.
HER MOST HVMBLE SERVANT
EDMVND SPENSER DOTH
IN ALL HVMILITIE DE-
DICATE PRESENT AND
CONSECRATE
THESE
HIS LABOURS TO LIVE
WITH THE ETERNI:
TIE OF HER
FAME.

Followed by "A letter of the Author's" "expounding his whole intention in the course of this worke." The letter is dated and signed "23rd of January, Ed: Spenser," and addressed :—

TO THE RIGHT NOBLE AND VALOROUS
SIR WALTER RALEGH KNIGHT
LO WARDEN OF THE STANNERYES AND HER
MAJESTIE'S LIEUTENANT OF THE
COUNTY OF CORNWALL.

The work was graciously received by the Queen, who bestowed various favours upon Spenser, including a life pension of 50*l.*—a very large sum in those days. (Spenser's repeated complaints of the difficulty of getting it paid by no means invalidate the authenticity of the grant!) He held successively several Government appointments in Ireland, and finally, at his death in 1596, in the forty-sixth year of his age, was interred with all honour in Westminster Abbey, where he was fitly laid beside Chaucer, the father of English song.

If all this is to be treated as legendary fable, English history in the sixteenth century becomes as mythical as that of the Norse tales of the Edda in the eleventh, and the sooner such misleading matter is thrown into the *Literary World's* litter basket the better, and it may further be expected that a few years hence some advanced critic may discover "overwhelming and irresistible proof that the delightful lines" of Tennyson, the inimitable humour of Dickens and Thackeray, the brilliant rhetoric of Macaulay, hitherto attributed to the inferior writers whose names they bear, were really the fruit of the profound intellect, the wide sympathies, the varied gifts of the Earl of Verulam's successor on the woollack, Roundell Palmer, Lord Selborne, whilome Lord Chancellor of England.

But to be serious. I have recently received from Mr. Brassington, Librarian of the Shakespeare Memorial at Stratford-on-Avon, an account of the Folio edition of

1623. This Folio is the basis of all the supposed cypher revelations, and the description I refer to affords the strongest evidence of the non-existence of *any* cypher concealed in its pages. He writes that :—

“The type used for the Folio of 1623 is not of unusual form, though there are irregularities in it—a characteristic of all English printing at that period.

“The sheets appear to have been corrected as they passed through the press ; and corrected and uncorrected sheets were afterwards bound up together into volumes. It is only upon this supposition that the fact that nearly all the copies of the 1623 Folio differ, can be accounted for.

“Take, for instance, the copy of the First Folio at the Memorial Library, Stratford-on-Avon. In it there are two obvious printers’ errors,* which occur, so far as is at present known, only in one other copy, viz., Lord Ellesmere’s. Slight variations of this kind are fairly common ; consequently, if Mrs. Gallup based her cypher, say, on one of the copies in the British Museum, it would not work in that at Stratford-on-Avon, which, worked according to Mrs. Gallup’s rules, might bring out quite a different story. Another copy might be produced with variant readings which would upset the second reading—and so on.

“In brief, the Folios themselves show the cypher to be non-existent save in the brain of the enthusiastic but mistaken lady, whose imagination fancies letters to be of unusual type when in reality in the vast majority of cases they are nothing of the kind. By means of these imaginary differences in the type the desired story is evolved. Fortunately [Mr. Brasington adds] it is in substance too absurd to be credible.”

It is ; and that any one of Mrs. Gallup’s mental capacity can be found conscientiously to elaborate such a figment as is offered us in her cypher story, or any intelligent man be found to accept it, is an intellectual phenomenon surely unrivalled in the annals of English literature.

* ‘3 Henry VI.,’ p. 172, column 2, lines 13, 15, “add” for *and*, “tis” for *his*.

SOME REMARKS ON
THE SHAKESPEARE PROBLEM

BY
G. C. BOMPAS.

SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON & CO.,

February, 1902.

THE above named work is, to my mind, so much the most plausible of all the pleas for Baconian authorship of the plays I have yet met with—its summary of the evidence (*as therein represented*) may so well seem at first sight nearly incontrovertible—that I am tempted to comply with a suggestion which has been made to me to print, for private circulation, a few remarks I noted upon it when first shown to me soon after its publication.

Subjected to close examination, it appears to me to be no less full of inaccuracies—and, if possible, yet more unfair in its suggestion of the false by the suppression of the true—than any of its literary predecessors. And this is the more unpardonable in one whose legally trained mind ought to have made him specially alive as to what does or does not constitute evidence.

I could point out numerous such culpabilities, but must limit myself to a very few of the most flagrant instances, and, even so doing, I fear some repetition of what I have already written in the last edition of my 'Bacon or Shakespeare' * will be unavoidable.

To begin with the *suppressio veri*. This is nowhere more conspicuous than in the quotations. The two great authorities respecting Shakespeare and Bacon are Halliwell-Phillipps for the one, and Spedding for the other. Mr. Bompas quotes Halliwell-Phillipps as admitting Shakespeare's scanty amount of book-learning when he went to London at twenty-three years of age, but omits the assertion of unalterable belief in his authorship of the plays.

Again, Mr. Bompas quotes Spedding's opinion that Bacon had "all the natural faculties wanted by a poet," but omits that, as the result of thirty years' study of his life and works, he held "the idea of his having written the plays to be an intellectual impossibility."

Once more, our author quotes Dr. Ingleby as saying, "The Bard of our admiration was unknown to the men of that age," and, "Assuredly no one during the 'Centurie' had any suspicion that the genius of Shakespeare was unique." When Mr. Bompas thought fit to quote (p. 94) this preposterous statement he must apparently have forgotten that on his very first page he himself tells us, "that the plays, or most of them, were attributed to William Shakespeare in his lifetime is not doubted, nor that this gave him a high reputation with many of his contemporaries." And Mrs. C. Stopes's 'The Bacon-Shakespeare Question' might have furnished him with page after page of enthusiastic admiration from literary men of Shakespeare's own day. Are we to suppose all these to have been fools, on the authority of Mr. Bright, who is quoted (p. 2) as saying any one who believes that Shakespeare wrote 'Hamlet' or 'Lear' must be?

Of the inaccuracies I will select but two:—On p. 43 I find as follows respecting Anthony Bacon's long residence abroad: "Anthony visited Germany and Switzerland, and in 1582 intended to go on to Italy, but was then hindered by war. His intimate friend and correspondent Nicholas Faunt, after travelling in Germany, passed six or seven years between Geneva and North Italy, and as Anthony continued his travels till 1592 he doubtless often accompanied Faunt to Italy." (The italics are my own.) Now it so happens that Anthony's correspondence affords detailed evidence of his ten years' travel—or, rather, residence—on the Continent. He went abroad in 1571, spent some months in Paris, and, after a very brief stay at Bourges, went on to Geneva, where he lodged with Theodore Beza till 1582, when he returned to France, visiting Lyons,

* The remaining copies of which are now in my own hands, price 1s. 6d., post free.





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Marseilles, Toulouse, and Bordeaux. For the five years from 1585 to 1590 he settled down at Montauban, returned for one year to Bordeaux, and then, utterly broken in health, went home. He arrived in England February, 1592, having never once set foot in Italy!

All this Mr. Bompas might have learnt from half an hour's inspection of the 'National Biography,' s.v. 'Anthony Bacon'; but, mistaking his own suggestive imagination for a legitimate source of information, he states confidently (p. 44) that Anthony, on his return home, "brought Francis the exact knowledge of Venice, Padua, and Verona which the plays exhibit."

The play of 'The Merchant of Venice' is my second instance of inaccuracy and mere conjecture. Under its first form and name of 'The Play of the Jew' it was performed in London in 1579. Without adducing one scrap of evidence for the conjecture, Mr. Bompas (p. 97) claims this as "one of Francis Bacon's earliest Dramas," and as "not likely to have been the only one." (N.B. He was then only eighteen years of age.) Furthermore, he connects Antonio's relief of Bassanio with Anthony's mortgaging part of his property "to pay his brother's debts." Here is a double inaccuracy. Not only did the mortgage not take place till some years later than the appearance of the play; but its object was not to pay Francis's debts, but to provide for his own expenses abroad.*

But from internal evidence in favour of Bacon let us turn to see how Mr. Bompas deals with direct evidence in favour of Shakespeare. In this respect, distortion of the plainest words of the most competent witnesses reaches its climax in his treatment of the title-page of the Folio of 1623, and of the paragraph in Ben Jonson's 'Discoveries' headed "De Shakespeare nostrat" (*sic*), which emphatically declare Shakespeare to be the author of the plays.

In setting aside the unequivocal language of these two authorities Mr. Bompas, along with all other Baconians, first makes Jonson, as well as the publishers, join in a gigantic fraud, and next makes him do it in the most ludicrously inappropriate manner. Imagine a clever man—such as "rare Ben" undoubtedly was—wishing covertly to praise a living friend, doing it by dedicating laudatory verses to "the memory" of one who had been dead seven years! More grotesquely absurd still is the supposed allusion to the stately Lord Chancellor as "treading the stage" in "the actor's socks." And this when the only reason for making a mystery of the authorship of the plays is alleged to have been Bacon's extreme dread of being supposed to have any connexion with the stage at all. But beyond even all this is the treatment of the 'Discoveries.' In that fragmentary collection of remarks upon notable men and events—left by Jonson for his executors to publish after his death—there are two paragraphs devoted to the highest posthumous praise of "the Earl of St. Albans." In another part of the book, among the "Poets," is the paragraph above mentioned in which Jonson speaks of Shakespeare in terms of the warmest personal affection, but adds in his answer to some who had praised Shakespeare for "never having blotted a line," that he himself "would that he had blotted a thousand." And we are asked to believe that all this, although nominally spoken of Shakespeare, Jonson really meant for Francis Bacon. Bacon! who of all writers was known to have carried the "labor limæ" to the most extreme extent: who, as Mr. Bompas himself tells us (p. 44), is said to have re-written the 'Instauration' twelve and the 'Essays' thirty times, and to whom the avowal of his authorship of the plays—had Jonson indeed known it to be his—could now, years after Bacon's death, only have brought increase of fame.

What possible motive does Mr. Bompas suppose could have induced Jonson, who had already in two paragraphs amply praised Bacon by name, to add a third utterly uncalled-for, and falsely headed, and so worded throughout as to fasten the authorship of the plays upon Shakespeare to all futurity.

The supposition is such an outrage on common sense—would go so far to render the most seemingly trustworthy evidence valueless—that one is equally astonished and pained to find any intelligent, highly educated persons lending themselves to its advocacy.

E. MARRIOTT.

The Close, Exeter,
14th June, 1902.

* See Spedding's 'Life and Letters of Bacon,' Vol. ii., p. 106.

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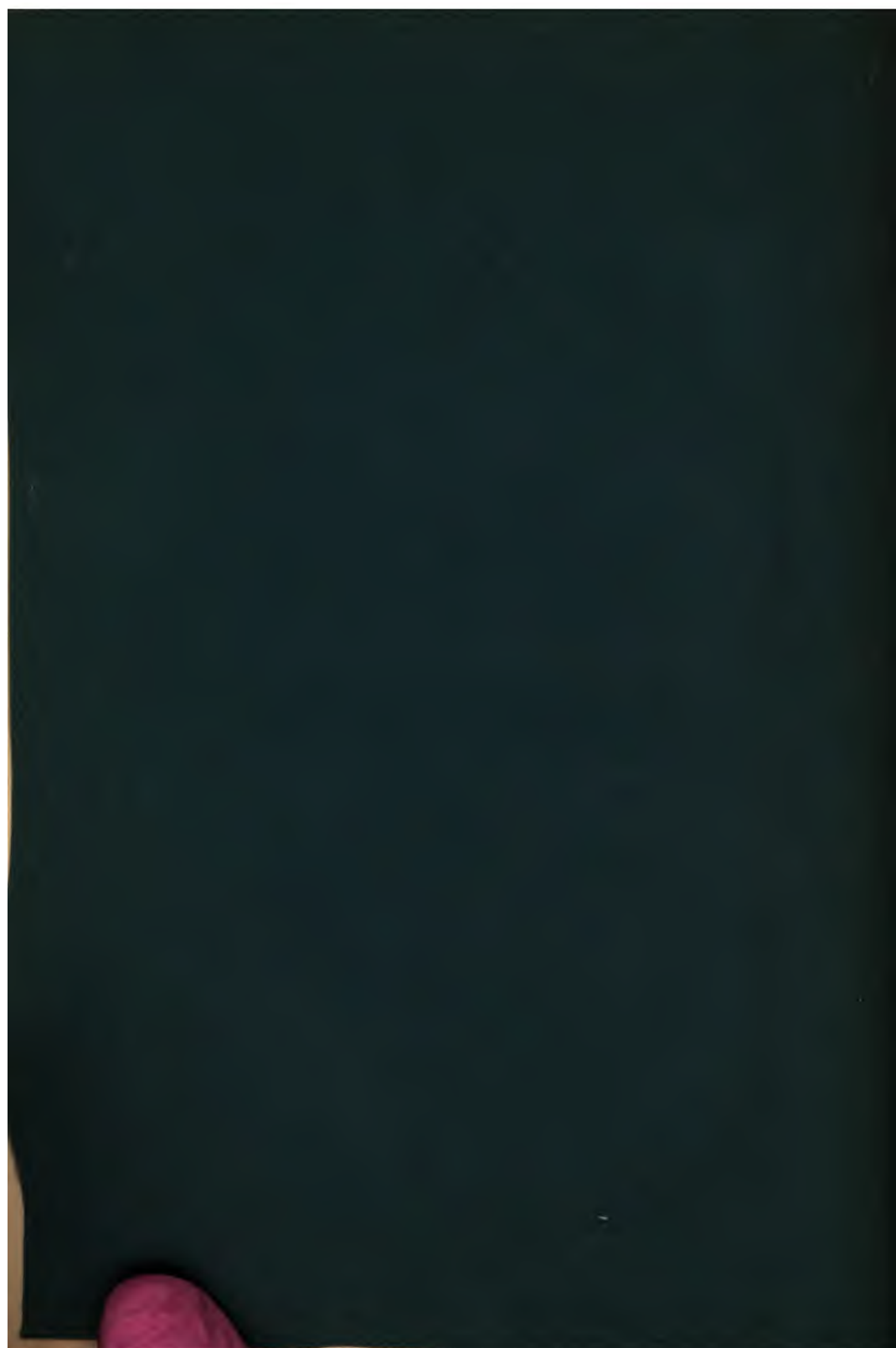
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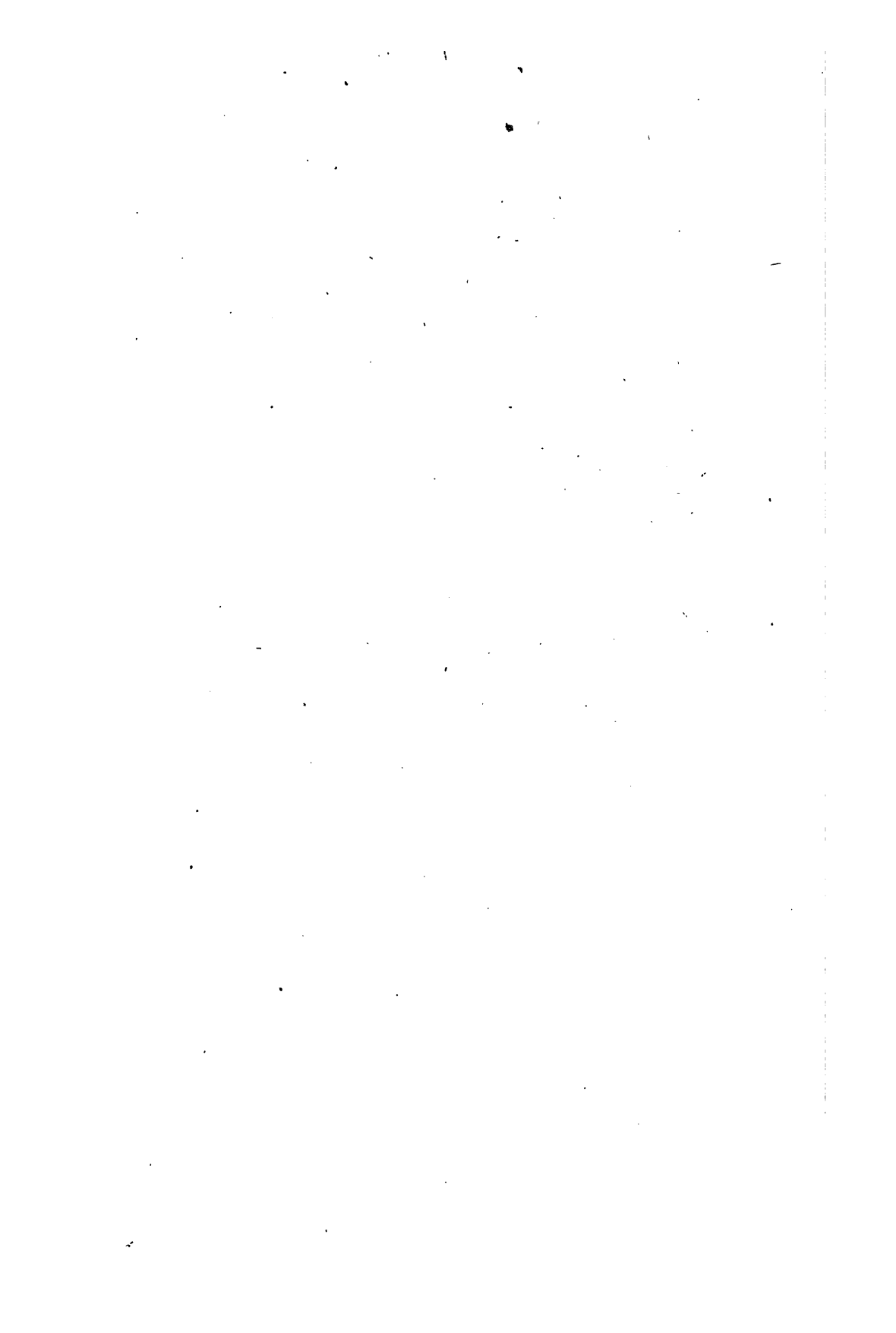
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